

NEWS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Myra Stoney, Health Director, director@swhealth.ne.gov, 308-345-4223

Trends of COVID-19 Cases in Southwest Nebraska

Southwest Nebraska Public Health Department (SWNPHD) has 32 new cases of COVID-19 reported September 21st to September 28th at noon. A breakout by county includes: Chase – 3; Frontier – 1; Furnas – 2; Keith – 3; Perkins – 1; Red Willow – 22, and no cases this week reported in Dundy, Hayes and Hitchcock counties. This brings the totals for the health district to 226 cases with 170 cases recovered. One additional death was confirmed this week as well.

A number by county does not identify the actual number of cases of COVID-19. There are those who have chosen not to test, were tested too early or have no symptoms. The preventive actions and behaviors that help you to stay safe should not change based on only one piece of information.

The first case of COVID-19 in SWNPHD was reported on April 15th in Red Willow County. A total of 19 cases were reported to the health department from April 15th until the end of May. Six additional cases were reported in June up to July 5th. Following the July 4th holiday weekend until Labor Day, the health district reported 137 cases with an additional 50 cases since Labor Day weekend.

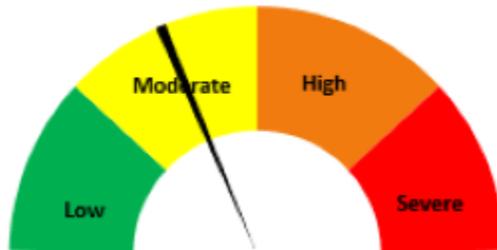
Many of these recent cases are related to athletic events or family gatherings and are the result of direct contact to a positive case. While many argue the science of masking, SWNPHD's investigations show that masking works. SWNPHD continues to recommend that even small gatherings take precautions to prevent the spread of COVID-19, including keeping guests 6 feet apart, washing hands and surfaces often, wearing a mask indoors, and asking anyone experiencing symptoms to stay at home.

The COVID-19 Community Risk Dial for the week of September 28th is yellow, meaning residents of southwest Nebraska have a moderate risk of contracting COVID-19. This risk level is based on several factors, including access to testing, healthcare capacity, and types of exposure. Testing for COVID-19 is widely available, through healthcare providers and TestNebraska events. Hospital capacity across the state is sufficient to meet the current need. Most of the positive cases in SWNPHD are related to direct contact or travel, with minimal community spread.

COVID-19 information is available at [CDC.gov](https://www.cdc.gov) and [swhealth.ne.gov](https://www.swhealth.ne.gov). You can also follow SWNPHD on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram. SWNPHD serves Chase, Dundy, Frontier, Furnas, Hayes,

Hitchcock, Keith, Perkins, and Red Willow counties. SWNPHD is located at 404 West 10th St (1 block north of Arby's) in McCook.

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COVID Yellow: Moderate Risk of COVID-19 Spread		
General Public	Outside the Home – Work, Social, In Public	At Home
Physical Distancing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consider staying at home most of the time, with caution for non-essential travel and work Distance at least 6 feet from anyone outside the home Work from home if possible Individual outdoor activities such as walking, biking, etc. are acceptable Cautious expansion of interactions with others, outdoor activities preferred Gatherings only with modifications for COVID-19 Events only as guided by SWNPHD 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No distancing for people without symptoms, unless they are under quarantine as a result of being exposed to someone who is infected Self-isolation of symptomatic persons Outdoor activities with distancing are acceptable.
Face Covering	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Face coverings suggested when unable to distance Face coverings for symptomatic people 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No face coverings for people without symptoms, unless they are under quarantine as a result of being exposed to someone who is infected Face coverings for symptomatic people
Hand Washing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Frequently wash hands for at least 20 seconds, especially after touching high contact surfaces, sneezing/coughing/touching face, or before eating Use hand sanitizer when handwashing is inaccessible or infeasible 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Frequently wash hands for at least 20 seconds, especially after touching high contact surfaces, sneezing/coughing/touching face, or before eating
Illness Monitoring	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> If ill with Flu-like or COVID-like symptoms, Stay at Home Minimize contact with symptomatic people Daily temperature checks at work 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monitor for COVID-like symptoms
Disinfecting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Avoid bare hand contact with any high touch surface Use barrier such as paper towel or clothing when bare hand contact is unavoidable Wash hands or apply sanitizer after touching high contact surfaces Enhanced disinfection, especially for high contact surfaces (door/other handles, light switches, bathroom fixtures) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enhanced disinfection, especially for high contact surfaces (door/other handles, light switches, bathroom fixtures)
At-Risk or Vulnerable Population	<p>For adults over age 65, anyone with underlying health conditions, and other populations at heightened risk from COVID-19</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stay home as much as possible Rely on help for needs outside the home (groceries, medications, etc.) Distance from those working outside of the home 	